

SUBJECT:

RESPONSES TO DIRECTOR/EXECUTIVE DIVISION'S INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE

Number: 01-017

DATE:

August 22, 2007

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ISSUE:

Improve the efficiency of the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) log-letter system in processing responses to incoming correspondence for the director's signature or other signatures as assigned, according to the appropriate timelines and department guidelines.

DEFINITIONS:

Correspondence: Written or electronic communication, which may include telephone requests.

LogLetter Database: Microsoft Access database system used to track correspondence received in the Executive Division and assigned to a specific bureau/division/office with instructions for response.

Letter Buckslip: Correspondence assignment information sheet printed from the LogLetter Database.

POLICY:

The primary purpose of the DEQ in carrying out its responsibility for protecting our environment is to serve the people of Michigan. It is essential that the DEQ be responsive to concerns raised by legislators; federal, state, and local officials; constituent groups; the press; and the public. All incoming correspondence to the DEQ deserves prompt, concise, substantive answers. Assurance of such responsiveness to incoming correspondence requires the close attention of all staff.

This policy focuses on necessary steps to improve the flow of correspondence for the director/Executive Division's signature. Timely responses shall be provided in accordance with the following procedures:

PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE:

Responsibility

Action

Executive Division Management Assistant and/or Receptionist

 Receives incoming correspondence, date stamps, and reviews for appropriate assignment within four hours of mail delivery. See DEQ "Who Does What List" for guidance on which bureau/division/office to make assignment to, and Attachment A for signature and distribution criteria.

Note: Before processing incoming correspondence, confirm that the incoming letter is not a duplicate.

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 Logs incoming correspondence into LogLetter Database and prints hard copy of Letter Buckslip (see DEQ Correspondence Guidelines for further instructions):

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- a. Click twice on Windows icon "New LogLetter"
- b. Click on "All Functions on One Screen"
- c. Click on "New Letter"
- d. Click on arrow to indicate "Letter Type" (i.e., DIR, GOV, etc.)
- e. Double-click on "Letter ID" to assign the next sequential number (i.e., log number), then
- f. Enter "Letter Date" (date on incoming correspondence)
- g. Enter "Date Received"
- h. Enter "Date Due" (10 business days)
- i. Enter "Reply to" (if different than author of incoming letter)
- j. Enter "Last Name"
- k. Enter "First Name"
- I. Enter "Organization Name"
- m. Enter "Subject" (brief description)

Note: The entry for Entity is always the bureau/division/office that is assigned to respond. Update only if reassigned to another bureau/division/office.

Note: All correspondence assigned for the director's signature will be due within 10 business days. Correspondence assigned for the Governor's signature will be due within 5 business days, and legislative phone inquires will be due within 2 business days.

3. Prints and scans Letter Buckslip with incoming correspondence and saves as pdf file under the U Drive using the following path:
U:\BSSXP\CorrespondenceLetters\(insert bureau/division/office acronym)(insert space)(insert LogLetter number)(insert the letter I to indicate "incoming" correspondence)(insert space)(insert last name of author of incoming correspondence).

Example: LWMD DIR00123I Smith

Attaches Letter Buckslip to original incoming letter and forwards to deputy director's management assistant for tickle file and/or routing as needed.

Note: Do not scan large documents such as books, pamphlets, etc., or attachments longer than 10-12 pages. Forwards original to responsible bureau/division/office and note such in e-mail assignment.

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4. In the LogLetter Database, under "Document Links," enters path of the incoming correspondence pdf file location.

a. Enters the number "1" in "Doc Seq #" (the number represents that this is the first document being linked)

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b. Tabs to next entry field and enters the name of the pdf document noted in No. 3 above.

Example: LWMD DIR00123I Smith.pdf

Note: The name of the file entered here must be exact and include the .pdf extension.

5. Sends the assignment electronically to the appropriate bureau/division/office management assistant ONLY via the DEQ-LogLetter e-mail account with the pdf file of the Letter Buckslip and incoming correspondence attached, with copies to director's management assistant and appropriate deputy director's management assistant (see Attachment A for further instruction).

The Subject Line will include the log-letter number, last name of author on incoming correspondence, and brief subject matter. The body of the e-mail should read "Assigned to (insert bureau/division/office acronym)."

Example for director's incoming mail assignment: DIR00123 Smith/Lenawee County CAFO (or if legislative request)
LEG00678 Levin/Request for Grant Monies

Example for Governor's referral: GOV00345 Robert/Waste Incinerators

Example for deputy director's assignment: DSP00456 Wright/Nestle Inquiry (or) DJS00234 Baker/Eaton Landfill

Bureau/Division/Office Management Assistant

6. Composes a cover e-mail with further instructions and forwards the Executive Division electronic assignment to appropriate bureau/division/office staff. Cover e-mail includes internal routing slip (see Attachment B), bureau/division/office due date, with the appropriate letter template attached (see Attachments C-I). Copies bureau/division/office chief/assistant chief, unit/section/district secretary, and other staff as appropriate.

Note: Correspondence assigned for the director's signature is due to the bureau/division/office approximately two days earlier than the Executive Division's due date.

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Note: Letter templates can be found in the LOGLETTER folder under General Templates in Word.

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7. Updates assignment in LogLetter Database with appropriate information in next assignment entry and prints the Letter Buckslip for tracking purposes. Be specific on who is handling the next assignment and what the due date is.

Bureau/Division/Office Staff

8. Reviews incoming correspondence.

Staff is encouraged to respond by quick telephone call, if appropriate, for "reply direct" assignments; or with approval from chief or deputy director's office on other assignments. Provide information and ask customer if they are satisfied or still require an answer in writing.

If written response is requested, continue to Step 10.

If customer is satisfied with telephone call, send a response e-mail to bureau/division/office management assistant and copy the bureau/division/office chief providing the following information: date of call, description of discussion, LogLetter number, and if customer is satisfied with phone response.

Note: If assignment is forwarded to another bureau/division/office for response, bureau/division/office management assistant to update assignment information in LogLetter Database and forward copy of Letter Buckslip and original of incoming correspondence to the bureau/division/office management assistant of next bureau/division/office assignment.

Bureau/Division/Office Management Assistant

9. If response is made by telephone call, updates LogLetter Database with information provided by staff, including date assignment was completed and name of staff person making the telephone call, and logs assignment out of the system.

Bureau/Division/Office Staff

10. Prepares draft response using the letter template and forwards to unit/section/district secretary.

Note: If an extension request is needed, please contact your bureau/division/office management assistant and refer to the DEQ Correspondence Guidelines for further instructions. Approval is needed when response is for Executive Division signature. Bureau/division/office chiefs to handle their own extension request directly for Chief or Reply Direct signature. If approved, bureau/division/office management assistant updates LogLetter Database with revised due date and appropriate information. If sending an interim response,

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please refer to the Correspondence Guidelines for instructions (see Attachment H for example).

Unit/Section/District Secretary

11. Proofreads draft response letter, makes necessary corrections, and saves as Word document under the specific bureau/division/office drive (this will differ for each bureau/division/office).

Note: If the response letter is generated in the district office, the district secretary will obtain the district supervisor's approval and e-mail the draft to the field coordinator secretary or bureau/division/office management assistant in Lansing.

Unit/Section Secretary

12. Prepares and forwards completed folder (hard copy of incoming letter, copy of response letter, and printed copy of internal bureau/division/office routing slip) to unit/section supervisor or staff person assigned for review.

Unit/Section Supervisor

13. Reviews folder contents, initials bureau/division/office routing slip, and forwards to bureau/division/office management assistant for review.

Bureau/Division/Office Management Assistant

14. Reviews folder contents, prints and initials Letter Buckslip with approval block and attaches to folder, and forwards to bureau/division/office chief for review.

Bureau/Division/Office Chief

15. Reviews folder contents, initials bureau/division/office routing slip and Letter Buckslip, and returns to bureau/division/office management assistant.

Bureau/Division/Office Management Assistant

16. Reviews folder content and forwards a completed package to appropriate deputy director's management assistant in the appropriate-colored bureau/division/office folder for review. Package includes: original response letter on watermark paper, two copies of response letter, and completed Letter Buckslip with appropriate sign-off initials.

Updates LogLetter Database indicating date assignment is sent to Executive Division.

Deputy Director's Management Assistant

17. Reviews package, attaches original incoming letter from tickle file, initials Letter Buckslip, and forwards to deputy director or other Executive Division staff for appropriate sign-offs.

Deputy Director

18. Reviews package, signs or initials Letter Buckslip, and returns to deputy director's management assistant.

Note: If revisions are needed, returns to bureau/division/office management assistant for revisions as requested, returns to Step 14.

Number: 01-017 RESPONSES TO DIRECTOR/EXECUTIVE SUBJECT: DIVISION'S INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE Page 6 of 6 August 22, 2007 DATE: 19. Forwards package to director's management assistant for Deputy Director's Management review. Assistant 20. Reviews package and forwards to director for review and Director's Management Assistant signature. Note: Once the response letter has been finalized per the DEQ Correspondence Guidelines, the Executive Division will strive for a 2-day turnaround (one day each for the deputy director and director). 21. Signs letter and returns to director's management Director assistant. 22. Returns original signed outgoing letter to Director's Management Assistant bureau/division/office management assistant for copying and distribution. Returns one signed copy of outgoing letter, the original incoming correspondence, and Letter Buckslip to deputy director's management assistant. Files one signed copy of outgoing letter in director's office files. 23. Updates LogLetter Database to indicate "Reply Date" and Deputy Director's Management "Author" (signatory/author), and completes the next Assistant "Action" line under "Events." Files original incoming correspondence, attached to the copy of the signed outgoing letter and the Letter Buckslip, in the Executive Division files. 24. Scans original signed response letter and saves as pdf Bureau/Division/Office Management file under the U drive, using the following path: Assistant U:\BSSXP\CorrespondenceLetters\(insert bureau/division/office acronym)(insert space)(insert LogLetter number)(insert the letter F to indicate "final" outgoing correspondence)(insert space)(insert last name of author of incoming correspondence). (Example: LWMD DIR00123F Smith) Links signed response letter to the LogLetter Database as Document 2. Forwards original signed response letter to appropriate staff to copy, mail, and distribute copies.

Note: Response letters should be mailed within one working day of receipt in bureau/division/office.

Attachment A

Signature/Distribution Criteria

For guidance on which bureau/division/office to make assignment to, the "Who Does What List" can be found on the DEQ's Internet home page.

Legislative Letters

Letters received from United States or Michigan senators and/or representatives should be assigned for the director's signature if the subject is regarding a policy-related or controversial issue, or if subject is budget-related. If the subject is regarding a constituent-related issue, the assignment should be made for the deputy director's or bureau/division/office chief's signature.

The electronic assignment should be copied to the director, deputy director, senior executive assistant to the director, legislative liaison, and their appropriate management assistants.

Federal Agencies

Letters received from federal agencies, such as the United States Environmental Protection Agency's administrator or regional administrator or the United States Army Corps of Engineer's colonel, should be assigned for the director's signature if the subject is regarding a policy-related or controversial issue, or if subject is budget-related. If the incoming letter indicates it is in response to a staff person's request, the assignment should be made for the deputy director's or bureau/division/office chief's signature.

The electronic assignment should be copied to the director (for Executive Division's 2-2 file), deputy director, senior executive assistant to the director, and their appropriate management assistants.

State of Michigan Department Directors or Other State's Department Directors

Letters received from these agency directors should be assigned for the director's signature if the subject is regarding a policy-related or controversial issue, or if subject is budget-related. If the incoming letter indicates it is in response to a staff person's request, the assignment should be made for the deputy director's or bureau/division/office chief's signature.

The electronic assignment should be copied to the director (for Executive Division's 2-1 file), deputy director, senior executive assistant to the director, and their appropriate management assistants.

Michigan Associations and Industry Representatives

Letters received from company presidents, vice-presidents, and chief executive officers, or from Michigan associations, such as Michigan Chemistry Council, Michigan Environmental Council, Sierra Club, Michigan Farm Bureau, and Michigan Municipal League, should be assigned for the director's signature if the subject is regarding a policy-related or controversial issue, unless approved by the director or deputy director for a different signature. If the subject is regarding a constituent or site-specific issue, the assignment should be made for the deputy director's or bureau/division/office chief's signature; the bureau/division/office chief may determine if a different signature is needed. Controversial issues may be assigned for the bureau/division/office chief's signature with appropriate deputy director's review of draft prior to mailing.

The electronic assignment should be copied to the director (for Executive Division's 4-1 file), deputy director, senior executive assistant to the director, and their appropriate management assistants.

Citizen Letters

In most cases, letters received from citizens should be assigned for the bureau/division/office chief's signature, or as a reply-direct assignment. If the incoming letter indicates the citizen continues to have concerns after staff has already responded, the assignment should be made for the deputy director's or director's signature, as determined by the Executive Division.

The electronic assignment should be copied to the director, deputy director, and their appropriate management assistants.

Miscellaneous Incoming Documents

Administrative Consent Orders – assign for bureau/division/office chief's signature. The electronic assignment should be copied to the deputy director and their appropriate management assistant.

Amendments to Appeal Orders by Supervisor of Wells – assign to State Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules for director's signature. The electronic assignment should be copied to the director, deputy director, and their appropriate management assistants.

Bankruptcy Notifications – do not log/assign – forward original to Financial and Business Services Division.

Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission correspondence – assign to Office of Geological Survey for chief's signature as assistant supervisor of wells; if regarding U.S. policy being developed or changed, then assign for director's signature. The electronic assignment should be copied to the director, deputy director, and their appropriate management assistants.

Michigan Association for Local Public Health (MALPH) meeting notifications/agendas – do not log/assign – route to director/Water Bureau.

Invitations to Attend Events and/or Speeches - assign to Office of Communications and Education indicating in comments to advise the director as appropriate. The electronic assignment should be copied to the director, legislative liaison (if legislative issue), and their appropriate management assistants.

Magazines and Pamphlets – do not log/assign – attach Executive Division routing slip and forward to director.

Attachment B [Example of bureau/division/office internal e-mail assignment]

FROM:	Lynda Jones
TO:	Kimberly Fish (addressed to author)
SUBJECT:	DIR00426 Meisner/Wetlands (LogLetter number, last name/subject)
Please read instructions:	the attached letter and prepare a draft response per the following
(inser	TO BUREAU/DIVISION/OFFICE CHIEF'S OFFICE: t 2 business days before Executive Division's due date) E: (insert whose signature letter should be drafted for) who should be copied on the correspondence)
Also attache	ed is a template to use in preparing the response.
DISTRICT SECRETARY: Please send the draft response to me via e-mail.	
UNIT/SECTION SECRETARY: Please print and attach this e-mail to the front of a folder. Include in the folder a copy of the draft response and the incoming correspondence. Save the draft response to the bureau/division/office drive (Example: sectiondata.lwm\LOGLTR\2006\Response Letters).	
DATE I	NITIALS
	Author
	Secretary Review
	Unit Supervisor/Section Chief Review
	Bureau/Division/Office Chief Management Assistant Review
	Bureau/Division/Office Chief/Assistant Chief Review
If you have	any questions, please contact me. Thank you!

Attachment C



STATE OF MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY LANSING



[Example of response letter for director's signature – Template DIR-DIRSig]

[insert date]

[insert Mr./Ms. full name] [insert address] [insert city, state ZIP]

Dear [insert Mr./Ms. last name]:

Thank you for your letter of [insert date of incoming letter], regarding

[Body of letter continues . . . include as much information as possible to answer all questions or concerns from the incoming letter. If enclosing additional information, please note what is being enclosed.]

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please contact [insert Mr./Ms. bureau/division/office chief's name], Chief, [insert bureau/division/office name], at [insert telephone number], or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

Steven E. Chester Director 517-373-7917

[Enclosure(s)]

cc: [Mr./Ms. insert names listed as CCs on incoming letter]
Mr. [insert deputy director's name], Deputy Director, DEQ
Ms. JoAnn Merrick, Senior Executive Assistant to the Director, DEQ
[insert Mr./Ms. bureau/division/office chief's name], DEQ

DIR-DIRSig

Attachment D

[Example of response letter for bureau/division/office chief's signature – Template DIR-CHFSig] [insert on appropriate bureau/division/office letterhead]

[insert date]

[insert Mr./Ms. full name] [insert address] [insert city, state ZIP]

Dear [insert Mr./Ms. last name]:

Thank you for your letter of [date on incoming letter], to Director Steven E. Chester, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), concerning [description/issue]. Director Chester has referred your letter to the DEQ's [insert bureau/division/office name (insert bureau/division/office acronym)] for response.

[Body of letter continues . . . include as much information as possible to answer all questions or concerns from the incoming letter. If enclosing additional information, please note what is being enclosed.]

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please contact [insert Mr./Ms. staff/author's name], [insert title], [insert bureau/division/office acronym], at [insert telephone number], or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

[insert bureau/division/office chief's name], Chief [insert bureau/division/office name] [insert telephone number]

[Enclosure(s)]

cc: [insert Mr./Ms. names listed as CCs on incoming letter]

Mr. Steven E. Chester, Director, DEQ

Mr. [insert deputy director's name], Deputy Director, DEQ [insert Mr./Ms. staff's name indicated in closing paragraph and/or letter's author], DEQ

DIR-CHFSig

Attachment E



STATE OF MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY LANSING



[Example of Governor's response letter for director's signature – Template GOV-DIRSig]

[insert date]

[insert Mr./Ms. full name] [insert address] [insert city, state, ZIP]

Dear [insert Mr./Ms. last name]:

Thank you for your letter of [insert date of incoming letter], to Governor Jennifer M. Granholm regarding [insert description/issue]. Governor Granholm has referred your letter to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for response.

[Body of letter continues . . . include as much information as possible to answer all questions or concerns from the incoming letter. If enclosing additional information, please note what is being enclosed.]

If you have additional questions, please contact [insert Mr./Ms. bureau/division/office chief's name], Chief, [insert bureau/division/office name], at [insert telephone number], or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

Steven E. Chester Director 517-373-7917

[Enclosure(s)]

cc: Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

[insert Mr./Ms. name of appropriate Governor's office staff], Governor's Office [insert Mr./Ms. names listed as CCs on incoming letter] [insert Mr./Ms. deputy director's name], Deputy Director, DEQ Ms. JoAnn Merrick, Senior Executive Assistant to the Director, DEQ [insert Mr./Ms. bureau/division/office chief's name], DEQ

GOV-DIRSig

Attachment F

[Example of Governor's response letter for bureau/division/office chief's signature — Template GOV-CHFSig] [insert on appropriate bureau/division/office letterhead]

[insert date]

[insert Mr./Ms. full name] [insert address] [insert city, state, ZIP]

Dear [insert Mr./Ms. last name]:

Thank you for your letter of [insert date of incoming letter], to Governor Jennifer M. Granholm regarding [insert description/issue]. Governor Granholm has referred your letter to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for response.

[Body of letter continues . . . include as much information as possible to answer all questions or concerns from the incoming letter. If enclosing additional information, please note what is being enclosed.]

If you have additional questions, please contact [insert Mr./Ms. name, title, bureau/division/office], at [insert telephone number], or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

[insert bureau/division/office chief's name], Chief [insert bureau/division/office name] [insert telephone number]

[Enclosure(s)]

cc: Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

[insert Mr./Ms. names listed as CCs on incoming letter]

Mr. Steven E. Chester, Director, DEQ

[insert Mr./Ms. deputy director's name], Deputy Director, DEQ

[insert Mr./Ms. staff name indicated in closing paragraph and/or letter's author], DEQ

GOV-CHFSig

Attachment G



STATE OF MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY LANSING



[Example of legislative response letter for director's signature – Template LEG-DIRSig]
(if letter is addressed to U.S. legislator, see page 11 of DEQ Correspondence Guidelines)
[insert date]

The Honorable [insert senator's name]
State Senator
State Capitol
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536
[or]
The Honorable [insert representative's name]
State Representative
State Capitol
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7514

Dear [insert Senator or Representative] [insert Legislator's Last Name]:

Thank you for your letter of [insert date of incoming letter], regarding

[Body of letter continues . . . include as much information as possible to answer all questions or concerns from the incoming letter. If enclosing additional information, please note what is being enclosed.]

If you need further information or assistance, please contact [Mr./Ms. insert bureau/division/office chief's name], Chief, [insert bureau/division/office name], at [insert telephone number], or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

Steven E. Chester Director 517-373-7917

[Enclosure(s)]

cc: [insert Mr./Ms. names listed as CCs on incoming letter]
[insert Mr./Ms. deputy director's name], Deputy Director, DEQ
Ms. JoAnn Merrick, Senior Executive Assistant to the Director, DEQ
Ms. Carol Linteau, Legislative Liaison, DEQ
Mr. Robert McCann, Press Secretary, DEQ (if media related)
[insert Mr./Ms. bureau/division/office chief's name]
Mr. James Kasprzak, DEQ (if budget related)

LEG-DIRSig

Attachment H

[Example of interim response for letter received by Governor/director - Template GOV-DIRInterim] [insert on appropriate bureau/division/office letterhead]

[insert date]

[insert Mr./Ms. full name] [insert address] [insert city, state ZIP]

Dear [insert Ms./Mr. last name]:

Thank you for your letter dated [insert date], to [Governor Jennifer M. Granholm or Director Steven E. Chester] regarding [state reason for their writing]. The Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) [insert name of bureau/division/office (insert acronym of bureau/division/office)] will be reviewing and responding to your submittal.

[Body of letter continues . . . provide a short explanation of why we need more time to respond to their questions or concerns. Possible options are as follows:]

Due to the amount of technical information submitted, the [insert bureau/division/office acronym] will not be able to respond with an in-depth analysis until [approximate date of response].

[or]

Due to the amount of research required to adequately address your concerns, the *[insert bureau/division/office acronym]* will not be able to provide you with an in-depth response for at least *[insert 30, 60, 90]* days.

[or]

The [insert bureau/division/office acronym] is reviewing the informational report you have provided. This information requires review and evaluation prior to providing you with a comprehensive response to the concerns you have raised. We anticipate that this review will be completed within [insert 30, 60] days and we will provide you with a response at that time.

Should you desire to contact the [insert bureau/division/office acronym] prior to our review and response, you may contact [insert Ms./Mr. full name/title], at [insert telephone number], or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

[insert bureau/division/office chief's name], Chief [insert bureau/division/office name] [insert telephone number]

cc: Governor Jennifer M. Granholm (if incoming letter addressed to Governor) [insert Mr./Ms. names listed as CCs on incoming correspondence Mr. Steven E. Chester, Director, DEQ [insert Mr./Ms. deputy director's name], Deputy Director, DEQ [insert Mr./Ms. staff name indicated in closing paragraph], DEQ

GOV-DIRInterim

Attachment I



STATE OF MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY LANSING



[Example of response letter for deputy director's signature – Template DD-DDSig]

[insert date]

[insert Mr./Ms. full name] [insert address] [insert city, state, ZIP]

Dear [insert Mr./Ms. last name]:

Thank you for your [insert date of incoming letter], letter regarding

[Body of letter continues . . . include as much information as possible to answer all questions or concerns from the incoming letter. If enclosing additional information, please note what is being enclosed.]

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please contact [insert Mr./Ms. bureau/division/office chief's name], Chief, [insert bureau/division/office name], at [insert telephone number]; or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

[insert deputy director's name]
Deputy Director
[insert telephone number]

[Enclosure(s)]

cc: [insert Mr./Ms. names listed as CCs on incoming letter]

[insert Mr./Ms. bureau/division/office chief's name], DEQ

[insert Mr./Ms. staff name indicated in closing paragraph and/or letter's author], DEQ

DD-DDSig